

Newsletter

May/June 2015

Blended Learning To Boldly Go Where The Corps Has Not Gone Before (Part I)

by
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BLENDED LEARNING DE- FINED

The term "Blended Learning" has a plethora of meanings which are as varied in its application. There is no generally accepted definition rather it is defined based on how it is employed. One school's blended

learning is another school's hybrid, or another school's mixed-model. Furthermore, the issue is not just one of labels but the lack of agreement on a broad versus a narrow definition as well. Without a clear definition, blended learning is perceived as some nebulous combination of online and face-to-face instruction. Even though the definition is wide-ranging, for clarity it may be just as important to identify what blended learning is not. A blend is using the best delivery methodologies available for a specific learning outcome or objective, including online, classroom-based instruction, performance support, paper-based (self-study), and formal or informal on-the-job solutions. It is not a hodge-podge of methods thrown together because "more is better." It is not using technology just because "we have it so let's use it." An instructional blend requires the rigor of a systematic curriculum de-

sign and development process that supports the learning objectives and outcomes and may incorporate numerous technological platforms and varied instructional methods across both resident and distance learning; exploiting the strengths of each while mitigating the weaknesses. This approach emphasizes making learning available in a variety of delivery formats that are adaptable to myriad of styles or preferences. Blended learning offers opportunities for an authentic and self-directed learning experience. For many training organizations it is a common mistake to force-fit content into a particular technology. Organizations often implement technology because they want to rush their returns on investment. Unfortunately, the "we've got it, so use it" mentality can drive weak initiatives, resulting in overly complicated designs that don't meet learning objectives. (continue on pages 2-4)



Capt David Janecke

Director, Train the Trainer School

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Competencies for the Online Instructor

By Steven W. Schmidt, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Adult Education/ East Carolina University

"Universities, colleges, business and industry, and many other entities, including the military, are jumping on the

online learning bandwagon, and are offering online courses to their learners." By Dr. Steven Schmidt

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ON PAGES 5-6*******

Blended Learning

To Boldly Go Where the Corps Has Not Gone Before

By Mr. William Weidow & Capt David Janecke

This paper will examine the unique application of blended learning in the military and the Marine Corps context however; even within the Marine Corps setting, it is not a one size fits all model. On the surface it would seem that the Target Population Description (TPD) in the Marine Corps would be homogeneous however, this could not be further from the truth. Although Marines are all immersed in the same culture and subjected to the same norms and mores, they are anything but homogeneous. A consideration such as gender, ethnic, racial, geographic, socio-economic, and educational backgrounds makes the TPD very broad. A multi-model approach to blended learning provides a solid foundation that will meet the needs of all learners.

In the broadest sense, blended learning can be defined or conceptualized as a wide variety of technology incorporated with conventional face-to-face classroom time with varying instructional methodologies employed in each setting. Regardless of the definition, these two core elements (online and face-to-face instruction) are critical to the blended learning concept. This is a salient point in the Marine Corps context. The size and function of formal learning centers in the Marine Corps varies greatly based on factors such as the mission, learning outcomes or objectives, target population, and the dominant domains of learning targeted. Not only are Marines “doers” but “thinkers” as well. Using this mind set, the blend will vary greatly and the notional pointer on the continuum that determines the approach will slide right or left based on the factors described above.

Blended learning is not a new phenomenon. In the last decade blended learning has grown experientially. In fact, seminal studies have shown, “three-quarters of the colleges and uni-versities surveyed reported a high demand for online courses in the last academic year. Roughly 30% of all registered students enrolled in at least one online course, resulting in an overall rise in online learning from 4.6 million to 5.6 million students in fall 2009. The 21% growth rate for online registration significantly surpassed the 2% growth rate for

overall student population (Allen & Seaman, 2010).”

TO BOLDLY GO WHERE THE CORPS HAS NOT GONE BEFORE

Blended learning is a major paradigm shift in the Marine Corps training and education community. Leveraging technology is not a new process, however blending distance learning, varied instructional methods, and technology with resident instruction while capitalizing on the strengths of each and mitigating the weakness is a next generation mindset. In the following section, a blended learning model will be introduced incorporating a variety of delivery and instructional methodologies tailored toward the Marine Corps. This model will consist of a phased approach which will include distance learning and resident face to face instruction. It must be underscored at this point that the model introduced here, is broad by intention and is “a model” and not “the model” that will work within the Marine Corps. Before unpacking the model template another important factor that must be considered in addition to the factors mentioned above when designing a blended learning program is the “Human-in-the-loop (HITL)” factor. HITL allows the user to change the outcome of an event or process. HITL is extremely effective for the purposes of training because it allows the learners to immerse themselves in the event or process. This immersion effectively contributes to a positive transfer of acquired skills to the real world. It is important to emphasize that “humans” are, and will always be the focus of any instructional program. This is congruent with basic tenants in adult education to provide a safe and challenging learning environment and a place where mistakes can be made and learned from. We must continually highlight that the design, development, and technologies used in a blended learning program must support the “human,” i.e. our learners. As stated, every method used, the LMS selected, the learning environments created should all focus on the learner and the objectives. We should never use an instructional method or technology just because we have it. This is a prime consideration during the design of a blended learning curriculum.

PHASE ONE:

This model consists of three phases; the first phase will consist of three major components. The initial contact will set the stage for the blended learning program. Administer rational logistical requirements such as registration, welcome aboard information, and any initial instructions to include technical preparation, establishing accounts, and basic tutorials on how to use the hardware/software required for the program will be covered. It is critical to ensure that every learner is comfortable using the required technology for the program. Learners will get frustrated quickly and fall behind if they are not able to keep up based their level of experience. This has to take place prior to the start of the course. Although it will vary based on the requirements of the formal learning center, initial contact should be approximately two weeks prior to the start of the course to allow enough time to correct any technical issues and allow the learners to get comfortable using the software. Once the initial contact has been made and the course registration is completed the course would begin.

The second component of phase one is the kick off. The kick off should be a single session that could be either a resident face to face or a distance learning session consisting of synchronous or A-synchronous format. For consistency of terms, resident as when persons meet in real time not using any electronic means. Synchronous is defined as any electronic communication that takes place in real time such as; chats, VideoTeleConferences (VTC), etc. A-synchronous is defined as communications that take place over extended time periods, not in real time such as threaded discussions, exchange of e-mails, or use of other means for voting, such as Survey Monkey. Since members may not know one another and will not have the opportunity to meet Face-to-Face (F2F), consider establishing business rules for member identification during threaded discussions. The intent of the kick off is to answer any questions the learners may have and to provide them with a learning map of the course.
(continued on page 3)

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This provides the student with all the information about the course to include goals, syllabus, course requirements, methods, and instructional platforms used. This will go a long way in reducing learner anxiety by removing ambiguity and making the learners stakeholders in the process by describing their roles and what is required as far as their behavior, required effort, and participation in the program. It is during the kick off that learning contracts will be introduced if deemed necessary by the formal learning center. Learning contracts provide several advantages in blended learning course. Accountability- In order for this to work in the Marine Corps, accountability is key. Individual Formal Learning Centers must hold students accountable for all requirements. The organization and facilitators are also accountable to do their part of the process as well. With the initial roll out of the blend there may be some serious growing pains. FLC Commanders may have to make some very hard decisions about dropping students who do not take the blended curriculum seriously. For example, those learners who may see the distance learning phase as “pre-requisite” vice “required” training. Self-Directedness is another critical element. Under every learning situation it is imperative that adult learners are self-directed. In fact, a blend will not succeed unless the learners are self-directed. Strategies to help learners shift their mindset and locus of control must be in place for the blend to work. The collaboration of all participants is important however, the onus of learning should rest squarely on the individual. This is another mind shift that must take place on both the micro and macro levels of the Marine Corps. As stated earlier the organizational paradigm shift must take place in the Marine Corps that allows for more responsibility to rest on the individual learner. In essence, this requires the organization to relinquish control to varying degrees. Conversely, In addition, as control is relinquished, the degree of accountability should rise proportionally. In other words, the greater degree of freedom allowed on the organizations part will equal a greater degree of accountability on the learners part. By encouraging self-directedness in the blended design it will

minimize learner frustration and maximize learning. This mindset is not absolute however, and will vary between FLCs.

The third component of phase one is the actual start of the course work. The course work will be determined by each individual learning center based on their Program of Instruction (POI). This can include any instructional methodologies selected to cover the established content. This can be tailored by the formal learning center based on their content requirements as established in their POI and can be delivered via resident or distance learning.

PHASE TWO:

The second phase will consist of two components. The first component of this phase should be first phase tie in. If phase one was indeed non-resident, this part of phase two would function as a segue to review and link learning that occurred in phase one to learning that will occur during phase two. This same paradigm would apply if phase one was resident and phase two is non-resident. This component should serve as a linking function so there would be a seamless transition between the phases. This component should also ensure that the base line of knowledge required to succeed in phase two is standardized between all learners. Assessment tools may be used to determine learner progress. FLCs may also establish a remediation process to assist learners that may have fallen behind to catch up to their peers.

The second component of phase two is implementation phase per the POI. Similar to phase one the curriculum in phase two will be determined by each individual learning center based on their requirements. This can include any instructional methodology selected to cover the established content. This can also be tailored by the formal learning center based on their content requirements and their target population description and can be delivered via resident or distance learning.

PHASE THREE:

Phase three of this blended learning model is the capstone. The capstone is a crucial culminating component of any training or education program because it serves as an assessment tool not only of the programs objectives but of the program itself. It provides a glimpse into the program’s effectiveness by measure the transfer of learning from the learning center to the work place. This may require the learner to go back to their real world environment and reflect and apply what they have learned in the previous two phases. This may include a coaching component from both the instructors from the previous two phases and/ or immediate supervisors in their work place. This may also include evaluations from their supervisors during the application of the knowledge and skills acquired during the blended learning course. In addition, self-reflection by the learner may be leveraged to determine if the program has accomplished the learning objectives or outcomes. The capstone must be tied into the learning contract ensuring the learner understands that completion of every phase would be a requirement for graduation. Regardless of how the program is constructed, linking all the components together is key to ensure the blend is a seamless symphony of methodologies, each method supporting and building on the others. Not using methods and technologies for their own sake but rather based on a thought out deliberate design. Sequencing of learning objectives, instructional methodologies, and technologies will be determined during the normal design/development process and must flow and transition seamlessly.

EVALUATING THE BLEND

As with any learning program evaluation is critical in determining if the program is hitting the mark. The Marine Corps in general, and a blended learning program specifically, are no exceptions. Evaluation must be an integral part of every phase and is ubiquitous throughout the program. (continued on page 4)

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There are numerous evaluation models that would work well in an adult learning environment however, Kirkpatrick's model works very well in the Marine Corps contexts and will be used to establish a framework for evaluation in this blended learning program. By measuring student reaction, student learning, changes to the learner's behavior in the real world environment, and the overall impact of the learner on their organization, will create a holistic view of the program. Evaluation instruments and rubrics should be created during the systematic curriculum design and development process and measure mastery of the learning objectives or outcomes. In the Marine Corps it is critical to measure if the learners are acquiring the knowledge and skills necessary to do their jobs and accomplish the mission however, measuring the limits of learning should not be restricted to "checking -off" the mastering the objectives to the exclusion of other learning. It is incumbent on the FLC to help the learners "self-assess" to the greatest extent possible. The FLC should stress self-evaluation and use instructional methods and create instruments and rubrics to help the learner focus on their own learning process. The learner is the focal point in the evaluation of any instructional program and it is the learner that can truly determine if they are transferring the knowledge and skills they acquired in the instructional setting and are using them in their world.

In Part II we will examine incorporating existing technologies and potential challenges to implementing a blended learning design.

****Look for it in the next COI newsletter.**

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SPOTLIGHT.... MEET DENA from

**Combined Arms Support Command
(CASCOR) -
Fort Lee, VA**



Training Specialist
Training Directorate, Transportation
Division, Highway Movement Branch

My job as a Training Specialist for the career management field (CMF) 88, military occupational specialty specialist (MOS) 88N. Serving as the lead training specialist for development, management and implementation of Active Army, National Guard, and US Army Reserve training courseware and products for the Transportation Management Coordinator's Course and NCO Education System (NCOES). Leading a team of subject matter experts (SMEs) in coordinating, reviewing and rewriting existing program of instructions (POIs), course management plans (CMPs), training support packages (TSPs), and/or lesson plans/materials for skill levels 1, 2, 3 and 4 training to ensure relevancy, emerging concepts and lessons learned are applied. Ensuring that training products development is in accordance with the Systems Approach to Training (SAT) process.

****Interested in a spotlight...send an email to usmc_ed&trng_coi@usmc.mil.**



Steven W. Schmidt, Ph.D

Competencies for the Online Instructor

By Steven W. Schmidt, Ph.D

Associate Professor of Adult Education, East Carolina University

Online learning has taken the world of education by storm. Universities, colleges, business and industry, and many other entities, including the military, are jumping on the online learning bandwagon, and are offering online courses to their learners. The benefits of online learning are many. It's flexible in the sense that it allows students to participate in courses at their convenience, and regardless of they live or work.

It's economical because students can participate without having to spend time and money traveling to training locations. It's customizable in the sense that students can spend as much, or as little, time on each course topic, depending on their individual needs. In addition, the practice of taking an online course can help students learn about technology as well as the course content they are studying. It's no wonder that online learning has grown tremendously over the past few years.

A difficulty associated with this rapid growth, however, is that organizational infrastructure necessary to support online learning may be lagging behind an organization's move toward online learning. One of the main ways this is evident is in the lack of resources many organizations offer to their instructors who transition from face-to-face teaching in the traditional classroom to teaching online.

An instructor asked to transition to online teaching often hears this sentence: "Just take your face-to-face course and move it online". The idea is presented in a very simplistic way. While it may sound easy,

the reality is that it is much more complex. There is a whole set of competencies associated with teaching online, and those competencies are different than those necessary for success in the traditional classroom. What we often find is that in their haste to transition to online learning, organizations forget that their instructors need support to develop those competencies. In fact, some organizations don't even consider that there are different competencies necessary for online instructors, and that their instructors might need help in making the transition.

Let's take a look at some of the competencies necessary for effective online instructors.

Technology skills

One of the major differences between face-to-face and online teaching is that online instructors must have appropriate technology skills in order to be successful. We can look at technology-related skills in two categories: First, online instructors must understand the technology associated with the learning management system (LMS) that is being used in the courses they teach. Examples of common learning management systems include Blackboard and Moodle. Instructors must be able to navigate and make optimal use of their LMSs in order to organize and teach their courses. Learners in an online class spend a lot of time on the course website, so it must be clear, organized, and learner-oriented. This requires the instructor to be proficient in the use of the LMS.

Second, online instructors must understand technology associated with learning activities that may be embedded in, or linked to, the course website. Podcasts, video-based lectures, computer simulations, online games and other activities can be developed by instructors and placed in their online courses. Pre-existing materials such as YouTube videos can be linked to course

websites. The development and placement of these types of things requires technology skills as well, and these skills are different than those related to LMS navigation and management.

A challenge for online instructors can be keeping up with changes in technology. Education-related technology changes as rapidly as any other type of technology, so continuous learning about technology should be an ongoing focus for all online instructors.

Instructional design skills

Instructional design skills are important for both face-to-face and online instructors. Developing course goals and objectives, planning units of instruction, developing activities, and evaluating learner performance are important regardless of the learning environment, and things like course goals and objectives may be exactly the same in face-to-face and online courses.

Organizational skills

Teaching online requires a great deal of organization. In my opinion, online instructors must have greater organizational skills than face-to-face instructors. Traditional classroom instructors can immediately correct misinformation, fix errors, and change things in their classes. Online instructors don't have that same luxury, as the instructor and students are not all in the same place at the same time. As a result, online instructors have to be organized and prepared from the start of the class. That is not to say that changes in online courses cannot be made. The communication of those changes must be thorough, and the instructor must use multiple methods of communication to connect with the different learners in the class. Too many changes (and too much of this type of communication) can result in confusion in the online classroom.

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Teaching Skills

A common misperception in online teaching is that those with appropriate technology skills can be effective online teachers. This is not necessarily the case. Technology skills are different than teaching skills. Often, the focus of teaching online is on the technology and less on the teaching, itself. Technology is a tool that can be used to help with instruction. It does not take the place of teaching. Teaching online involves presenting and discussing learning goals, explaining concepts, facilitating activities that help students to learn, helping students link course content to their prior knowledge, providing guidance and feedback on assignments, and encouraging reflection, exploration and creativity. There is not a lot of difference in the types of activities teachers in face-to-face and online courses do. As is the case with instructional design skills, a difference is the way in which the activities are carried out and also the tools that are used. Another difference is that face-to-face classroom instructors are able to immediately “take the pulse” of the class by asking questions and gauging responses (both verbal and non-verbal). The online instructor doesn’t have that luxury, so it takes longer to gauge whether learners are engaged, understand content, and are learning.

Communication skills

Communication is another competency we can look at from a variety of perspectives. First, online instructors must be good communicators with their students. They must understand the multiple ways of communicating with students, and must be able to use those ways depending on the situation. They must craft communication carefully. The tone of a message, for example, is easier to understand when it’s communicated face-to-face. Humor that may work in a face-to-face classroom may fall flat in

the online classroom. They must be clear and concise communicators.

The timing of communication is important, as well. In a face-to-face class, students can get immediate response from the instructor. That’s not always possible in the online classroom, but online instructors can set guidelines and policies for communication up front.

Instructors must also be adept at facilitating communication among students in the online classroom. Creating opportunities for students to share experiences and learn from each other helps everyone in the class to feel valued and included. Discussion forums, group projects and virtual meetings can be used to encourage interaction and collaboration, and the online instructor must understand how to use these methods effectively to create a positive learning environment. Effective communication promotes collaborative learning, reciprocity, and the development of relationships among students, and between the student and the institution.

Summary

These are just a few of the competencies that are necessary for online instructors. You’ve probably noted that many of them overlap in some ways. In which of these competencies are you proficient? Which would you like to develop more thoroughly? Consider this list when making learning goals for yourself or for instructors with whom you work. None of these competencies, by itself, will make for a good online teacher. The development and maintenance of all of them will help online instructors be successful.

About Steven W. Schmidt, Ph.D.—

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Each of you as an educator or trainer knows the importance of resilience in education; resilience is the catalyst that propels a learner forward from an adversity that affects their learning. I imagine many of you are well read on the subject of building resilience and know the importance and value of building resilience in your students. Toward this end, Christian Moore, author of The Resilience Breakthrough has written a short expose` for our newsletter. Enjoy – Jim Hilton, Community Manager

The Adversity Advantage *by Christian Moore*

Christian Moore

Founder of WhyTry

My name is Christian Moore. I am a proud father. I am a husband. I'm an author, a licensed clinical social worker, and the founder of WhyTry, one of the largest resilience education programs for youth in the U.S.

I also grew up with severe learning differences and ADHD in a large blended family. In my school days, I acted out to cover my inability to process anything the teacher was saying. By a miracle, I managed to make it to high school graduation, but the question of what to do next scared me to death.

I still remember wandering the school commons on yearbook day at the end of my last high school year. College campus booths and recruitment reps lined every wall, but before I could go investigate, the school counselor, who knew me well, intercepted me. "Christian," he said, "if you want to take off after you're done signing yearbooks, you don't have to stick around." And I knew he was right. College was not an option for me. So I left.

To make a long story short, my journey eventually *did* lead me to a beautiful and reputable university campus, where I found myself in an exhausting daily struggle to earn a bachelor's degree in social work. Every day I was there I felt like I'd won the lottery, but some days I felt like an academic fraud for being there. I kept waiting for campus security to come and tap me on the shoulder and say, "Young man, we've looked over your records, and it's apparent you don't belong here," before dragging me kicking and screaming off campus.

My worst fears were realized when a guidance counselor learned of my anxiety about taking the required math course to earn my degree. I confessed to her that I didn't know the answer to nine times six or how

to read the clock on her wall, and she thought I was joking. When I finally convinced her I wasn't being funny, she was shocked. "You shouldn't be here," she blurted. "You'll never cut it on this campus."

This run-in with the counselor was one of many adversities I encountered in my struggle to earn my bachelor's degree -- and eventually my master's degree -- and become a licensed clinical social worker. But each experience like this one was a lesson -- greater than any I found in my college textbooks -- on using challenges as **fuel to thrive** in every aspect of life. These experiences, combined with observations I made as a social worker and as founder of the WhyTry Program, helped me understand the power of resilience and the ability we all have to access it.

The Resilience Breakthrough

The truth is, we can all increase our resilience in a world of instability and narrowing opportunity, whether facing financial troubles, health setbacks, challenges on the job, or any other problem. We can *all* have our own resilience breakthrough -- and can each learn how to use adverse circumstances as potent fuel for overcoming life's hardships.

Understanding the Sources of Resilience

There are **four sources of resilience** that every human being has access to. These sources are:

- **Relational Resilience: You don't give up because of the knowledge that others depend on you.**

I have two sons, and when times get rough, I think about them and what would happen if I threw my hands up and quit. Their dependence on me has helped me reach heights in life I never thought possible.

- **Street Resilience: You take pain and use it as fuel.**

Remember that guidance counselor who told me I didn't belong on her campus?

After the initial shock subsided, I was able to use the pain of that interaction as fuel to fight my way even harder to graduation. I was determined to prove everyone wrong who thought I couldn't make it. Anger, disrespect, and discrimination can be some of the most powerful sources of motivation, fuel, and resilience if you know how to channel them.

- **Resource Resilience: You increase your resilience by recognizing and utilizing the resources around you.**

I had an experience in college where my pockets were empty and I had no idea how I was going to buy food and pay rent that month. I was a newlywed, and my wife had just been laid off from her job. While she frantically searched for work, I was forced to take a good hard look at my skills and abilities -- my resources -- to come up with a solution. I didn't know how to run a cash register or operate a computer, so at first I felt like a failure.

Then I remembered that I love art and am pretty good with watercolors. There was a wealthy gated community nearby, and with camera in hand, I decided to go where the money is. I snapped photos of a few houses and hurried home to paint them in their greatest detail, right down to each daffodil blossom in the yard. I framed the paintings and returned to the neighborhood. I took a deep breath before knocking on the first door, hoping to get two hundred dollars for the painting. The woman who answered gasped when she saw her home portrayed like that, neatly framed on a canvas, and offered me six hundred dollars. Everyone whose home I painted bought a painting.

- I came home a more confident person -- able to provide my family with basic needs and even make a car payment. I had found a way to access my talents and abilities to begin solving a really big problem. That is Resource Resilience. (continued on page 8)

The Adversity Advantage

By Christian Moore

- **Rock Bottom Resilience: You believe in your ability to change your circumstances, no matter how helpless.**

You may be saying, “I’ve never hit rock bottom. Life is going pretty well for me.” But the fact is, you don’t have to be homeless or penniless to hit your own personal rock bottom. Your rock bottom could be a divorce, a failed business, a closeted addiction, or something smaller – what I call “emotional rock bottom” – when you’re simply burned out, exhausted, overwhelmed, or in mental-shutdown mode. You might find yourself just going through the motions.

When you have Rock Bottom Resilience, you believe in unforeseen options no matter how bad things get, and that drives you to keep moving forward. You have an awareness that losing in the past does not necessarily equal losing in the future.

Drawing on the positive and negative

One of the most important keys to accessing resilience, especially in a military setting, is to draw on negative emotions and experiences along with the positive as fuel to thrive in life. The military’s current approach to resilience education draws on positive psychology – the basis of CSF2. Strength-based programming and positive psychology are valuable. However, it’s also important to acknowledge the broad range of human emotions, showing individuals how to harness the energy that exists in positive life experiences as well as negative. This creates more productive outcomes and increases resilience.

Which of the four sources are you strongest in? Which ones could use some work? I’ve developed a free self-assessment to help you find out at www.resiliencebreakthrough.com.

Resilience is a vital skill that *everyone* deserves access to – the soldier, the teacher, the parent, the inmate, the kid who, like me, struggles daily with ADHD and severe learning differences. I hope you’ll join me on my journey to help the world experience a “resilience breakthrough.”

Visit my website to order your copy of The Resilience Breakthrough today:
www.resiliencebreakthrough.com.



Dennis D. Hall

Training, education, and development are challenging fields. The challenge can become even more daunting in the adult learning environment to the uninitiated. However, after many years, I've recognized some principles in adult learning that make training successful in each event. Successful trainers use these principles to maximize effective learning. Now that I have your attention, you are probably thinking what is this magical formula? Well, the magic is created by the trainer and the students. The trainer recognized that adults want to focus on real-life issues at work. The "here and now" is what matters to adult learners not things that may be useful in the future. Adult learners get restless if they feel their time is being wasted. Therefore it is important to show the value of the training early. It is an added bonus, if the training can be applied to the learner's personal life too.

The instructional environment must appear to be safe, comfortable, and perhaps even fun. It is important that the trainer create a climate of respect at the start of the training session. Lay out the ground rules of acceptable behavior and that everyone will be treated with respect. The trainer can make it clear that everyone's input is welcome and no one is to ridicule another student. Adults need to maintain their self-esteem and the ground rules will help set the course up for success. Adults have considerable experience to contribute to the training and have a need to share it. Therefore, they want to talk and discuss their own viewpoints gained from their experience. The best trainers consult and work with adults instead of being directive. Adults are accustomed to being active and trainers can capitalize on their desire to participate. I've recognized that many adults dislike long lectures and one-way communication. I am amazed that many trainers still apply

The Adult Learning Environment

By Dennis D. Hall

this approach. Some adults like to push the envelope and take risks in any environment. Trainers have to be prepared for the unexpected. Trainers can maintain control by pointing out at the outset administrative matters pertaining to the training session. For example, the requirement to turn off electronic devices in class and when to expect a break, etc. If not, trainers should not be surprised when adult learners take phone calls in class or walk out of the classroom in the middle of discussion.

Adults like the opportunity to meet new people and get their viewpoints on similar matters. The effective trainers allow the opportunity for introductions, group activity and discussion. Adults need to move to stay physical and mentally active during training sessions. The trainers that change up the group dynamics on practical exercises are the most effective. I've observed many trainers presenting the same course materials but the instructor's enthusiasm made all the difference. It is no small matter that the instructor shows enthusiasm for the subject matter. Another factor very effective with adult learners is the element of surprise. Adults may show up for training with the attitude they've seen it all. They may feel like there will be nothing to surprise them. However, when there is a surprise that occurs they could not fathom, it can make all the difference in the world. A few timely surprises entrenched throughout the training will keep the adult learner interested at peak mode. The trainer should provide regular short breaks for adult learners. Because they are likely not used to extended periods of sitting. Adults need the opportunity and time to ask questions. Preferred instructors provide interesting anecdotes, examples, and stories in the designed course material. Adults want to know how to do something rather than theory. They acquire the material much faster if it is meaningful to them. Also, retain the learning longer if it is important to them. Adults tend to learn from their discussions together. Some adults prefer to work in group on activities. While others adults may prefer to

work alone. The preference may depend on the activity or level of comfort. Adults bring a good deal of life experience and expertise into the classroom environment. They want their experience acknowledged and opportunity to share it. Adults want to know why they should learn something or how it will add to their current knowledge on the subject.

The principles above give some pointers to the trainer in creating a successful learning environment. However, to create the magic there are some requirements from the student. First, they should follow the guidelines provided by the instructor to get the most out of the training. The student should display behavior in the class setting that is professional and respectful. Second, the student should participate fully in the practical exercises. Ask questions to clarify key points. Take notes, highlight key points in their manuals, and pay attention. Finally, and most importantly, be willing to share their experience, expertise, and enthusiasm with the class.

The aforementioned principles should be considered as proven methods for creating an effective learning environment. The evidence was collected from large amounts of student course evaluations and classroom observations. It is clear to me that these principles are some of the most common denominators found in the most successful adult learning environments. When the trainer and the student apply the adult learning principles mentioned above to the design and delivery of training magic really happens.

About Dennis Hall -

Dennis D. Hall is a Supervisory Human Resource Development Specialist of a Civilian Workforce Development Section. He is a retired Army First Sergeant, former drill sergeant, and taught life skills courses at a high school to seniors for more than five years. He has a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from National-Louis University in Wheaton, Illinois.



Evaluation of the Instructional Design For New Designers Workshop and Training Needs Analysis Workshop presented by Langevin Learning Services

By Kevin Williams

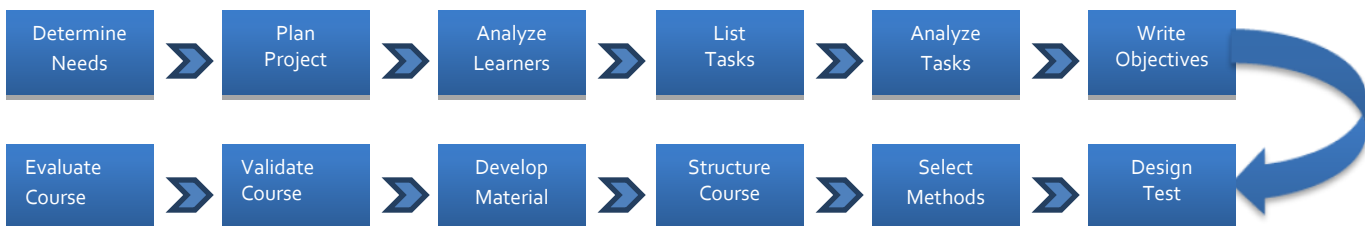
Kevin Williams

I recently attended a three day *Instructional Design For New Designer* workshop, and a one day *Training Needs Analysis* workshop in March 2015. Both workshops were facilitated by Langevin Learning Services.

Being new to the 17XX community, I saw this as a great opportunity to obtain those necessary tools and resources that would help me move beyond just being a trainer/instructor to a facilitator of learning, design and deliver learning that engages adult learners, and address training and development needs of those who attend formal training given by my organization.

Instructional Design for New Beginners Workshop

The methods presented during the Instructional Design for New Designers workshop included a 12 steps instructional design cycle. They include:



These 12 steps are more detailed than the ADDIE and SAT instructional design models which I am more familiar with. The goal of this Instructional Design cycle model is to design instructor-led training that sets learners up for success on the job. The big difference I see between the 12 design cycles model and ADDIE, besides the amount of steps is the 12 design cycle is a more comprehensive, in-depth, step by step process: and the ADDIE model, which includes some of the same steps, provides more of an overview of the instructional design process. It was pointed out during the workshop that the ADDIE and SAT models are still used within the instructional design community. When looking at the ADDIE model and the 12 step design model, the biggest difference I saw was in the 12 steps design there is no clear indication of when to implement a course. According to the provided student guide between the Validate and Evaluate course steps is where you would execute the course implementation. I agree with the student guide that implementation should sit between validate and evaluate, because within the validate step is where you would evaluate course materials to see if they work, and the validate step allows time to make adjustments if needed.

Training Needs Analysis

The one day Training Needs Analysis workshop introduced a step-by-step procedure for identifying organizational training needs. The Workshop focused mainly on analyzing an employee's performance to determine if training is needed. Some of the tools provided that I thought useful were the model that laid out a 3 Phase approach to Training Needs Analysis.

The Phases include:

- ***Phase I/Collecting Data (determine expected performance vs determine actual performance)***
- ***Phase II/Conduct Performance Analysis (get to the root of the problem).***
- ***Phase III/Calculate Cost-Benefits of Training and Writing Proposal to Management***

Phase III is most important to me because the ability to show, and articulate, the cost benefit when proposing a new idea or concept to management will greatly enhance the probability of it being approved and implemented. (Continued on page 11)

Evaluation of the Instructional Design For New Designers Workshop and Training Needs Analysis Workshop presented by Langevin Learning Services

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Facility

The workshop was conducted in downtown Washington DC. The classroom facilities were comfortable, all needed supplies and resources were available. Underground parking was provided at the cost of \$21.00 per day. This was in contrast to the post-email send out from Langevin that stated parking would be \$19.00 a day. Recommend taking the Metro.

Course Material

The course material for both workshops included an easy to read, and well laid out, small spiral notebook style student guide. It contained practical training aids, detailed instructional design checklists, and samples decision-making tables. Some of the workshop's form templates are also available electronically via [My Langevin personal account](#).

Class Participants

There were 18 participants in the three day instructional design workshop and 9 participants in the one day training needs analysis workshop. Both workshops included a diverse group of participants with diverse employment backgrounds. You had participants from the car manufacture industry, information technology, air and space industry and government industry. All participants performed some form of training for their specific organization.

Instructor

Class started (8:00) and ended (4:30) on time every day. The instructor was well prepared for class. He transitioned smoothly between each topic, and included a related attention gainer at the beginning of each topic. He did a great job facilitating the class. He was very knowledgeable of the instructional design and training needs analysis curriculum. He had over 15 years of leader-led training experience. He used various learning methods and media including: walls charts, power points, references, group discussions, and role play. The instructor did a great job deploying

learning activities and methods to keep you engaged. Group projects were the most prevalent form of learning that was deployed by the instructor.

Conclusion

As an Information Technology Instructor, I feel that both workshops will unquestionably help me identify training gaps and needs in my organization. In addition, both courses will aid me in providing essential training that will better serve the Marine Corps military and civilian communities and focus on organizational training needs. Completing the Instructional Design for New Designers and Training Analysis Needs Workshops, better equipped me to serve my organization with efficient and effective knowledge of instructional design and training analysis to improve the quality of our training suite. I would recommend both courses to those who are new to the 17XX community and someone who just want to learn the latest instructional design and training analysis needs models.

About Kevin Williams—

Kevin A Williams is an Information Technology Instructor for the Marine Corps Administrative and Resource Application Development Section. Prior to joining the Administrative and Resource Application Development Section, Kevin worked in the civilian sector as a Veteran Opportunity to Work Coordinator.

Kevin retired from the United States Marine Corps as a Master Sergeant in April of 2010. His last assignment, he served as a Marine Corps Career Planner, Staff Non-Commission Officer In-Charge of the Marine Corps Reserve Career Management Team, Manpower & Reserve Affairs Reserve Affairs Division located on Marine Corps Base Quantico. Prior to joining the Career Management Team, Kevin served as a Marine Corps Career Planner Instructor at Marine Corps' Recruiter School aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego CA.

Kevin has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Management from the University of Phoenix. He lives in Fulton MD, with his wife. He has four boys and enjoys listening to jazz and coaching his youngest son's basketball team.

Training

Testimonials

"I have previously attended in-person training's presented by The Bob Pike Group. This was my first time attending one of their on-line trainings. I found whether the training is on-line or in person The Bob Pike Group provides quality training! I particularly enjoyed the latest social media trending sites for our target population & the top 10 reasons people use social media. Our program is planning to implement more of the social media training into our programs thanks to this training!"

—Barbara Hawkins, Marine Corps Base Quantico, Marine Corps Family Team Building Trainer, Marine Corps Family Team Building

"I really enjoyed Bob Pike Group's Social Media webinar. It was very informative and gave me some great ideas on how to use social media when marketing our services. We currently use Facebook as our social media marketing tool, but now I will be looking into other services like Twitter and SlideShare. I also appreciated the handout and website references such as the Social Book Marking Top 15 sites."

—Cindy Harris, MCCS Yuma, Education Services Officer

"A good investment. Langevin provided a great workshop that was well designed. Their approach to the design cycle principles was an insightful experience, full of valuable tips that can easily be used by new designers. However, it was the instructor that stood out. His presentation style took what one would consider boring material and transformed it into material that had meaning, bring life to words on the page which could be applied to each of our different situations. His energy, enthusiasm, and his passion made the three day workshop worth coming too."

—Sandra Acol, Academics Training Specialist, Quantico, VA

Is an HSI Certificate in Your Future?

By Leanne R. Cannon, Ph.D., Manpower, Personnel & Training/1750

Human Systems Integration (HSI) is the professional discipline that brings the human components into systems acquisition and design. As a DoD requirement, DoD Directive 5000.01 states that, "DoD acquisition policy requires optimizing total system performance and minimizing the cost of ownership through a 'total system approach' to acquisition management by applying Humans Systems Integration elements to acquisition systems." A wise Instructional Systems Specialist (ISS) used to say that the ISSs in acquisition are "1750s on steroids" because not only are they engaged in the typical ISS functions, but also the acquisition related functions that accompany life cycle logistics.

Acquisitions 1750s are encouraged to work towards a certificate in Human Systems Integration. The increased knowledge garnered from the HSI certificate programs enables ISSs to better articulate HSI needs and ensure HSI requirements are met within their program areas of expertise. There are two HSI programs that most acquisition ISSs attend: The Human Systems Integration Program offered through the University of California San Diego Extension and The Certificate in Human Systems Integration offered through the Naval Post-Graduate School, Graduate School of Operational and Information Sciences. Both of these programs lead to certificates in Human Systems Integration, but each focuses on specific aspects of HSI.

The UC San Diego program (<http://extension.ucsd.edu/engineering>) focuses on the Technical Readiness Reviews (TRR) throughout the acquisition cycle. The three course, synchronous, online program takes learners through the HSI domains of (Human Factors Engineering, Manpower, Personnel, Training, Safety, Survivability, and Habitability) and the acquisition technical reviews and examines HSI topics associated with each review. The three courses associated with this certificate program are: Introduction to HSI, Methods and Analysis/Measurements and Managing the HSI in the Acquisition Process (Technical Authority). Each course runs approximately eight weeks, back-to-back, so this program can be completed in a relatively short period of time. Class meeting times are coordinated by the instructor and

students and done during regular work hours. Recommended attendees for this program are: Systems Engineers, Software Engineers, Program/Project Managers, Test & Evaluation Engineers and Technical Staff. Upon completion of this program, learners are designated as an HSI Technical Authority. For more information on this program, contact Tony Babaian at tbabaian@ucsd.edu or call at (858)-534-9357.

The Certificate in Human Systems Integration through the Naval Post-Graduate School (www.nps.edu/or/hsi) focuses more on the technical solutions needed for incorporating HSI within an acquisition program. Due to the mathematical construct of this program, learners must have a bachelor's degree and two or more pre-calculus courses with a B or better average in order to be admitted to this program. The four courses in this asynchronous, online program are: Introduction to HSI, HSI in the Acquisition Lifecycle, HSI Tools, Techniques, Approaches and Methods and HSI Case Studies and Applications. These courses are each one quarter in length and can double as a residence quarter if the learner chooses to continue with an HSI education at the Master's Degree level. This course is recommended for all military and government civilians who work with, or are interested in HSI in the acquisition process. For more information on this program, contact the Program Director at: HSICertProg@nps.edu or call (831)-656-2473.

Both of these are excellent HSI programs, but due to their different areas of focus, learners should choose the program that best suits their needs and schedules. The benefits of expanding your academic and professional technical depth and network can never be overstated. Adding certificates, such as these, to your professional portfolio and lifelong learning goals only serves to increase your job performance and effectiveness and personal satisfaction.

You can find more Leanne Cannon articles (below) on our website in the newsletter archives:

Visit: <http://www.tecom.marines.mil/resources/coi.aspx>

⇒ *Create an e-Learning Strategy! (May 2014)*

⇒ *Lifelong Learning: You CAN teach an Old Dog New Tricks! (June 2013)*

Manager's Corner
Just a thought... by Jim Hilton

What is Competency: A competency is a set of defined behaviors that provide a structured guide enabling the identification, evaluation and development of the behaviors in individual employees.

Why they are important: Competencies can help you establish goals; create expectations; identify high-performing talent; and help you grow into positions.

What to do if you are not sure about your competencies:

Review your organization's mission.
 Review your Position Description
 Conduct a position analysis

Types of Competencies the COI is focused on:

Technical Competencies

Job—Specific

May apply to a category of positions

Examples:

- ⇒ Accounting principles
- ⇒ Human resource law
- ⇒ Structural engineering principles
- ⇒ Adult Education Theory
- ⇒ Early Childhood Theory
- ⇒ Instructional Theory
- ⇒ Instructional Technology
- ⇒ Educational Leadership

How do Competencies Apply:

Competencies create the strategic link between your "department's" objectives and your performance goals.

For more information regarding competencies please visit:

Webpage: <http://www.tecom.marines.mil/resources/coi.aspx>

Once on the website you go to "references" and you'll find the category "competencies" and other categories of references

If you want more specific guidance regarding competencies — please contact Mr. Jim Hilton @ james.hilton@usmc.mil or (703) 432-0861.

*****Resource*****

**Marine Corps General Library Program
Virtual Resources**

The MCCS Library Program is now offering patrons access to digital versions of over 260 magazines. Zinio allows you to download popular magazines to your computer, tablet or mobile device! New magazines are being added every day! Please visit your installation library for access.

For more information:

MARADMIN 214/15

<http://LIBRARY.USMC-MCCS.ORG>